

Uncle Joe The Story Teller



He Talks to the Little Ones About Rain---Where the Little Drops Come From and How They Benefit the Earth.

"You want to know a whole lot, it seems to me," said Uncle Joe, half in earnest and half in fun, "just as long as even one little girl is thirsty for knowledge, I will try to tell her so she may understand."

"Rain is water divided up into little drops that get so heavy in the sky that they may no longer float on the atmosphere and necessarily fall to earth. The Chinese name for rain is 'luk sui,' or 'falling water'."

"Water is an element which may exist in many different forms. The largest beds and sheets of water are called oceans, seas and lakes. The rivers are ribbons; the brooks, threads and the ponds, dots, in the fabric and pattern of Mother Earth's dress."

"Nobody has ever presumed to say whether there is more water in the air or on earth. But we know that our atmosphere which extends at least one hundred miles outwardly from the surface of the earth, is ever charged with water dust, which is water reduced into its smallest particles and held in suspension by the actions of the sun's beams until through natural causes, such as the splitting of clouds by lightning and the sudden rushing of cold air currents, the water dust coheres into drop form and falls to earth as rain. All of which descriptive definition is too much for little girls."

"So, let us say, the sunbeams kiss the earth, and their hot breath warms the water so that it rises all into the air, where it stays until it becomes even smaller than the little bits, or atoms, that go to make up the air we breathe. And, because they are hotter and smaller than the air atoms, they rise and swirl through the little cracks and holes of the air until they get way out into the sky, where, when the lightening rubs through or the cold air chills them they are forced together again, and become drops of rain,

which, because they are heavier now than the air must fall to earth."

"In this way the sun-warm, or hot breeze, and the air carry off water every day, and all day long from the top of lakes, rivers, ponds, springs and seas. And even from the surface of ice and snow. Without any fuss or noise of any kind, the water of our earth is being drawn up invisibly into the sky."

"Remember, the water dust is always mixed all up together in the air, and we can no more see it than we can the air itself. But, when it gets up to where it is heavier than the air it comes or flows together again, packing together until it is so closely packed that we can see it in the sky in the form of clouds."

"Now, let us suppose at some point in the Atlantic ocean, where the sun's kisses are hot, one of these tiny bits of water dust rises in response for a float high in space, until after while along comes a cold current of air, and forces it to mingle in with lots of other little bits until the whole mass becomes a vapory cloud which may be seen. The rushing of air is called wind, and we all know that wind blows and moves."

"Supposing, then, our bit of water dust is now a part of the cloud. The cloud itself may still be light enough to float. And it does float, and is borne on the breath of wind until lightning or more cold air forces the vapor even closer together until it forms into many little drops of water, which fall into the sea or on the land, there to stay a while and be taken up and carried again on a similar journey."

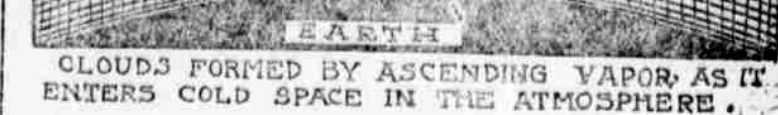
"In this way it is possible for our bit of water dust to go to the north pole and back, or to visit any and all portions of the world."

"The further away from the equator it gets the more likely it is to meet with not only cold but freezing

air. When freezing air hits it in the form of water dust, or vapor, it falls in the fine form of snow. If it has already started on its journey to earth in the form of rain and passes through freezing air on its way down, the rain falls in the form of sleet or hail."

"A peculiar thing is that when water is frozen into the form of snow, the snow-drops, or crystals, are always six-sided in shape. If you go out after a snow-shower and search carefully, you will see that the snowflakes are not mere lumps of frozen water, but beautiful six-pointed crystals, as white and pure that when we want to speak of anything being spotlessly white, you say that it is 'white as snow.' Some of these crystals are simply flat slabs with six sides, others are stars with six rods or spikes springing from the center, others with six spikes each formed like a delicate fern. No less than a thousand different forms of delicate snowflakes have been found among such a great variety, yet they are all built on the six-sided and six-pointed plan, and are all made dazzlingly white by the reflection of light from the faces of the crystals and the tiny air-bubbles built up between them. This is why, you see, when the snow melts, you have only a little dirty water in your hands; the crystals are gone and there are no more air-bubbles held prisoners to act as looking-glasses to the light. Hoar-frost is also made up of tiny water-crystals, and is nothing more than frozen dew hanging on the blades of grass and from the trees."

"But how about ice? It looks clear. But if you take a magnifying glass and look down on the surface of ice in the clear light of a sunny day, you will see there, too, a number of star-like forms. Only these look dark. In the center of each appears a bright spot. These imprison-



CLOUDS FORMED BY ASCENDING VAPOR AS IT ENTERS COLD SPACE IN THE ATMOSPHERE.

ed flowers, which are seen when ice is melting, are our old friends the crystal stars turning into water, and the bright spot in the middle is a bubble of empty space, left because the watery flower does not fill up as much room as the ice of the crystal star did."

"Ice always takes up more room than water. That's why water pipes burst in severe cold weather. As the water freezes, it expands, or gets bigger; and, if in something tight, will crack it. The great spans of the Eads bridge crossing the Mississippi river and leading into St. Louis were subjected to ice-packing before they were connected up. For as the freezing ice-packing expanded, the enclosed metal parts of the spans were forced into smaller space and could be fitted more easily together. In the summer time the St. Louis bridge expands throughout its metal parts and consequently tightens up so that there is less rattle."

"Supposing the drop of water of which our little bit of water dust was a part had fallen to earth and had lodged upon the petal of a rose or the leaf of a tree--what, then, might become of it?"

"Trees and plants of all kinds thrive at times, and need water as much as every living thing on earth does. All forms of life drink up water greedily, and each drop of water helps to give them life. Live and bye, when the plant gives up life, it absorbs no more water. In the case of vegetables, fruits and other forms of plant life which are eaten by the different representatives of the animal kingdom, the water kind would best be served by a careful attention to the planting, growth and saving of trees in America."

with, water is constantly traveling. "When rain strikes the earth it is either soaked up or started back to the sea by means of brooks, streams and rivers. What is soaked up by the ground passes through the minerals of earth and mixes with them until it tastes like them. But it all gets to the sea some time or other. And, as the sea is the great dumping ground of the water-washed land, and as the sun-beams' kisses refuse to take up anything but pure water dust, the washings of earth are left in the sea, and those with what is already there give to the ocean its quality which we call salt."

"The surface of the earth is constantly changing. Every time there is a rain it takes off a little of the earth's surface here and leaves it there, or else carries it on to the sea. Sometimes an island in the sea sinks entirely beneath the light, or the land of earth is raised. Volcanoes, earthquakes, and floods inside the earth are constantly throwing up new land, and the rains are ever washing it down and carrying it to the sea."

"A few words more, and we will be through with his rainy rain-drop. Of late there has been a cry not only in New York, but also here and there all over the United States against the cutting down of too many trees. Whether or not the trees draw the rain and thereby provide water for the land and its people is too deep for us to go into just at present. But, we do know that deserts are the places where there are the fewest plants, and it would seem that the good of mankind would best be served by a careful attention to the planting, growth and saving of trees in America."

"WHAT is rain?" asked little Miriam, of Uncle Joe, the Story Teller. "It's a whole lot of water in drops," answered Uncle Joe. And then he returned to his book. "Yes, I know," persisted Miriam, "but I want to know how the water gets into little drops, and where they come from and where they go to."

OUR FRIEND GEORGE L. BLUM A VERY POPULAR CITY OFFICIAL

For More Than Five Years He Has Been the Guardian of the Streets of Marion—His Ancestors Fought with Napoleon—Came to America When but a Boy—Lived in Marion Thirty Years

Perhaps there is not a resident in the city that has had a more interesting career than George L. Blum, assistant supervisor of streets. His ability as a public officer and honest straightforward manners have won for him innumerable friends and in his own simple, unassuming way he has unconsciously attained great popularity.

Mr. Blum has been the guardian of Marion's fine system of streets for more than five years. That he has always performed his duties in an able manner is demonstrated by the excellent condition which the streets are in at the present time. He has untiringly labored for the good of the city and his efforts have been appreciated.

There is not a member of the public service board that would consider dispensing with his services. When the political situation was such that it was necessary to appoint a man of different politics in Mr. Blum's position, the board quickly created another place for the city's faithful servant. He was appointed assistant street supervisor and in that capacity he will continue to be the city's same faithful official. It has been introduced by a prominent city official that Mr. Blum should be appointed to a life position and it is very probable that the honor will be conferred before many more seasons.

When Mr. Blum first assumed the duties of street supervisor, five years ago, there was about fourteen miles of paved streets in the city. At the present time there are twenty-eight miles and Mr. Blum succeeds in keeping it in excellent condition. The subject of this article is perhaps one of the most highly educated German residents of the city. He is able to converse in German, French, Spanish and English and can write a plain hand in each. He was born at Frankfurt-on-the-Maine, Germany, and is aged about 68. He received his early education in a private school at Hamburg and later graduated from a course at the University at Halle-Minden.

At the age of eighteen years, Mr. Blum became ambitious to see America and after bidding his friends farewell sailed alone for this country. After landing in New York, he wandered through the country and finally settled at Sandusky City, Ohio. There he remained eight years, conducting a lumber business. He came to Marion about thirty years ago and worked at the stone-mason trade for several years. For a number of years he managed the old Peters' stone quarry which is now the site of King's magnificent artificial lake. Later he conducted the Ballentine quarry and then for ten years was employed by the Leffler and Bland contracting firm. After conducting a butcher shop for a few years he finally assumed the duties of street supervisor, being first elected by the service board which was composed of Messrs. Ben Wanles, William Morganthaler and George Schoenlauf.

Mr. Blum has been a life long democrat and has stood firmly for the principles advocated by "Miss Democracy" for 37 years. His party elected him councilman from the first ward in the year '96 and in that office he established an enviable record, having been one of the strongest advocates of street improvements.

The grand parents of the subject have an enviable historical record in the old country. Mr. Blum's grandfather was a veteran of Napoleon's great army and followed the general in his fatal march to Moscow, in the year 1812. "George" says that he well remembers when his grandfather held him on his knee and disclosed to him tales of that terrible march.

The grandfather lived to be 84 years old and was said to be the last Napoleon veteran to die, in the central part of Germany.

Mr. Blum is always prepared to tell a good story and is an excellent listener. He readily accommodates his friends and is always willing to lend a helping hand. His services are always at the public's disposal and a better or more agreeable character cannot be found on the city's official role.



PLAYS AND PLAYERS

MARION FAMILY THEATER. Eva Ray at the Marion Family Theater. Three packed houses greeted Miss Ray Friday afternoon and evening.



MISS EVA RAY. This Evening is Your Last Opportunity to "Ask Miss Ray"—At the Marion Family Theater.

The matinee performance was for ladies only and fully five hundred of the weaker sex spent a most profitable hour with Miss Ray. On this occasion, Miss Ray wore the magnificent gown presented to her by the High Priestess Hachana during her stay in India, last summer. The gown weighs forty-seven pounds and is one of the most beautiful creations ever seen upon the stage. There are four hundred jewels on the rich fabric and it is valued at \$20,000 by Miss Ray.

At the evening performance nearly a hundred questions were answered. One lady was told where her long lost brother was located. A telegram sent to Denver, Colo., early this morning brought the first word from him received in eighteen years. The lady was Mrs. William H. Carpenter of Davis street.

Next week, Manager Vail will offer a very strong bill at the Family theater. As hundreds have been turned away during the week on account of packed houses, Mr. Vail endeavored to have Miss Ray remain for another week, but her bookings would not permit of such a thing. The bill is one that should appeal to the amusement loving public of the city.

The Knudsen introduce a comedy playlet that is most entertaining, singing, yodeling and rich comedy are found in abundance in the act. Morgan and Reley are next on the bill in a great comedy turn that is simply bubbling over with mirth and melody.

The Garry, comedy and burlesque jugglers are far above the average entertainers and their act is sure to make a hit with the crowd.

E. P. Appleby, the world's great banjoist, comes here very highly recommended. As a player of the banjo he stands in a class by himself.

E. P. Brown will sing, "It's Great To Be a Soldier Man." The last of the week he will sing "The Black Lamb."

The moving pictures are "The Modern Mother" and "Life in a Trade Forest." The prices are the same as usual.

AT THE GRAND. All lovers of good vaudeville should not fail to visit the Grand Opera House this evening and witness the "Heber Brothers" big show. The troupe which will be seen tonight, is on its twenty-fifth annual tour of the United States. It has established an enviable reputation and draws large audiences in every town.

It is a big company of high class actors, comedians, musicians and specialty artists. The show will consist of all of seven acts. There will be the Lady Paderewski, black face Washburn in comedy stunts, an act entitled, "A Trip Through the Alps,"

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The Taylor Stock company will open a week's engagement at the Grand Opera House, starting Monday, Jan. 13. The company comes highly endorsed by the press and public as a first class repertoire company. They will produce on Monday night the greatest of all, American plays, "The Queen of Queer Street." High class vaudeville acts are introduced between

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